

GREAT OCEAN ROAD



The Great Ocean Road started as a project to create work for WWI returned servicemen. Funding came from public donations raised by the Great Ocean Road Trust. The Country Roads Board later completed the road, which linked all the coastal towns along its 241 kilometre length. The road has become a tourist attraction equal to the great coastal roads of the world.

The Great Ocean Road follows the contours of the land – it drops to the coast to give access to beaches and climbs the cliffs to give views over the Great Southern Ocean and Bass Strait. The first sections were built by the Great Ocean Road Trust and handed over to the Government on 2 October 1936.

The road was proclaimed a Tourist Road on 2 December 1936 and renamed the Great Ocean Road on 16 February 1972.

TOIL AND TOLLS

Work started on 19 September 1919 and most of it was done by hand. Among the workers were thousands of soldiers returning from World War 1. Their labours are commemorated by other plaques at this site.

At first, funds were raised by a public trust; then tolls were levied from 1922 to 1934. When control of the Great Ocean Road passed to the Country Roads Board in 1936, the toll-gate was ceremoniously unlocked.

BRIDGES AND ANCHORS

The low-lying road hugs the coast and has to cross creeks and rivers. Many bridges were built with local timber. In the 1950s the timber bridges were replaced with concrete structures.

Rock falls often closed the road for days or weeks at a time. To stabilise 500 000 tonnes of rock at Windy Point, 45 cable anchors from 20 to 40 metres long were installed in 1971.

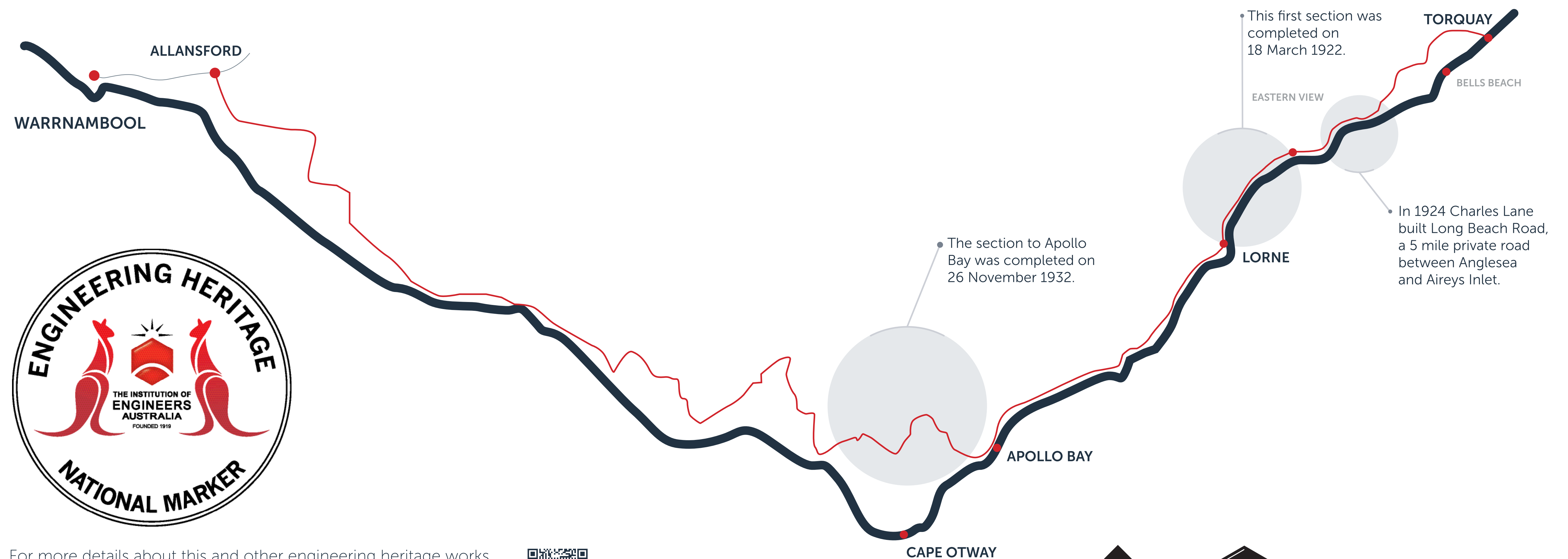
Civil engineer William Calder was the first Chairman of the Country Roads Board. He had an important role in guiding the development of the Great Ocean Road until his death in 1928. Calder, after whom the Calder Highway is named, often inspected roads on horseback.

The Great Ocean Road gives access to tourism sites such as the 12 Apostles – there were only ever 9 of them and one collapsed on 3 July 2005.

About 7 million people a year visit the Great Ocean Road region, making it one of Australia's most popular destinations. Travelling the road itself is one of the great attractions.

"The finest ocean road in the world"

– Great Ocean Trust 1918



For more details about this and other engineering heritage works, go to engineersaustralia.org.au/heritageregister/search

